(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to contain the prices of foodgrains, especially wheat; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Wholesale Price Index of wheat has registered an increase of 10.3% as on 28.1.2006 as compared to the wheat prices in the corresponding period of last year. In respect of retail prices, the price increase at different centres has ranged from Rs. 0.50 per kg to Rs. 4.00 per kg during the one year ended on 13th February, 2006.

(b) While there have been increases in the open market wholesale and retail prices, the prices of wheat under the Targeted Public Distribution System have not been increased.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to keep a check on the prices of foodgrains, especially on the price of wheat, are as under:—

(i) Freeze on the Central Issue Prices under the TPDS;

(ii) Increased allocation of wheat under the Open Market Sale Scheme;

(iii) Decision to import 5 lakh tonnes of wheat to the Southern States;

(iv) Ensuring adequate availability of wheat stocks in the TPDS and Welfare Schemes in all States.

(d) Does not arise.

Committee on exodus and brain drain of doctors from CHS

*9. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a committee was set up sometime back to report *inter-alia* on the exodus and brain drain of doctors from Central Health Services under the chairmanship of Mr. Javed Chowdhury, former Union Health Secretary;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said committee has since submitted its report and if so, the details thereof and the action, if any, taken thereon; and

(d) if answer to part (c) above is in the negative, by when the committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) The Committee was constituted in September, 2005, under the Chairmanship of Shri Javed A. Chowdhury, IAS (Retired), former Health Secretary to (i) look into the circumstances leading to the increasing trend of the Government doctors including doctors from All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi/Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh seeking VRS/ Resignation; (ii) identify the speciality/super-speciality streams that have become more vulnerable to this attrition, along with reasons therefor; (iii) suggest further incentives including changes in terms and conditions of service, conditions for further training, etc. to retain them in Government; and (iv) suggest measures/disincentives to arrest the further outflow of doctors from Government.

The Committee has since submitted its report. The Committee has identified an element of attrition in the Central Health Service particularly in specialities of Teaching, Non-Teaching and Public Health Sub-Cadres.

The decision on the report of the Committee can be taken after detailed study of the same.

Grants for controlling infant mortality

*10. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has announced a grant of $24.3 million for preventing and controlling infant mortality and extending cooperation in controlling other diseases like Kala Azar and Malaria;

(b) if so, on what terms; and